

In re Patent Application Serial No. 10/087,626
Amendment dated May 30, 2003
Reply to Office Action of December 31, 2002

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Remarks

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for his courtesy in granting the interview of May 29, 2003 with Applicant's attorney. At the interview, proposals were made and discussed which overcame rejections in the Office Action, and such proposals are now carried out formally in this amendment.

Claims 14-15 and 18 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Chaiken et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,333,111). Claims 16-17 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chaiken et al.

With respect to claims 14-18, the Office Action stated that no significant patentable weight is given to functional/intended use recitations not defining any specific structure. The Applicant accepts this point and, because those recitations articulate the novelty and non-obviousness of Applicant's invention over the cited prior art, herein amends those claims such that the claim elements are expressed in "means plus function" language as allowed in 35 USC 112, sixth paragraph which states "an element in a claim for a combination may be expressed as a means or step for performing a specified function without recital of structure, material or acts in support thereof, and such claim shall be construed to cover the corresponding structure, material, or acts described in the specification and equivalents thereof."

Independent claim 14, as amended, requires an "improvement comprising: reference feature identifier means for automatically determining a coordinate region of the reference features if the reference features are not in an expected coordinate region on the sheet-receiving surface, and for sensing metrics of the reference features in order to infer the approximate positions of the registration marks when the coordinate region of the reference features is known." The cited prior art lacks such reference feature identifier means for automatically determining and sensing and such means cannot be read into the prior art disclosures. Therefore, claim 14 and its dependents, claims 15-18, are allowable over the cited prior art.

Therefore, Applicant believes that all rejections have been traversed by amendment and argument and all claims are in proper form for allowance. Early favorable action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney if that would be helpful in facilitating resolution of any issues which might remain.

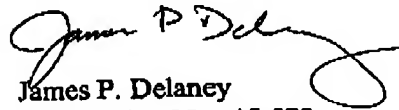
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As stated above, please debit Deposit Account 10-0270 for the necessary two-month extension.

Respectfully submitted,

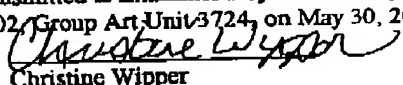

James P. Delaney
Registration No. 45,578

Dated: May 30, 2003

Janssen, Shupe & Munger, Ltd.
245 Main Street
Racine, WI 53403-1034
Attorney Docket No. MG-105US

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that the following documents: (1) Amendment After Final Office Action; (2) transmittal cover sheet; (4) Combined Amendment and Petition for Extension of Time all involving patent application serial no. 10/087,626 are being facsimile transmitted to Examiner Boyer D. Ashley at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, facsimile no. 703/872-9302, Group Art Unit 3724, on May 30, 2003.


Christine Wipper

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